

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 04255 131518Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----131526Z 017249 /41
O R 131501Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2666
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T CAIRO 4255

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, IS
SUBJ: RABIN VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND PRES CARTER'S REMARKS
ON ME

REF (A) STATE 53875, (B) STATE 53329, (C) CAIRO 4245,

SUMMARY: FAHMY IS CONCERNED OVER IMPACT IN EGYPT AND ARAB
WORLD OF PRES CARTER'S PUBLIC COMMENTS ABOUT ME PEACE PROCESS.
A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO PRES SADAT MIGHT BE USEFUL. END SUMMARY

1. I MET WITH FAHMY FOR ONE HOUR MARCH 12 AND DELIVERED
POINTS IN REF A TO HIM IN WRITING SO THAT HE COULD PASS THEM ON
TEXTUALLY TO PRES SADAT. THERE ENSUED LENGHTY DISCUSSION OF
ME PEACE PROSPECTS, PART OF WHICH REPORTED REF C. FAHMY FOC-
USSED ON PRES CARTER'S PUBLIC REMARKS DURING RABIN VISIT.
I GAVE HIM TEXT OF ME PORTION OF MARCH 9 PRESS CONF AS CARRIED
IN WIRELESS FILE WITH PASSAGE QUOTED IN REF B UNDERLINED.
I CONFINED MY OWN RESPONSES TO GUIDANCE PROVIDED IN THAT
TELEGRAM.

2. GIST OF FAHMY'S VIEWS WAS THAT PRES SHOULD NOT HAVE
SPOKEN OUT SO FRANKLY ABOUT "DEFENSIBLE BORDERS" (WHICH HE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 CAIRO 04255 131518Z

CLAIMED EVERYONE KNEW WAS AN ISRAELI TERM) WITHOUT ALLUDING
TO ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS OF ME PEACE SETTLEMENT, ESPECIALLY AS
CONCERNED PALESTINIANS. WHEN I RESPONDED HE SHOULD READ ENTIRE
TEXT OF PRES'S PRESS CONF, HE ANSWERED THAT HE HAD AND UNDER-
STOOD CONTENT AND CONTEXT OF WHAT PRES WAS SAYING. HOWEVER,
MOST PEOPLE, INCLUDING EGYPTIAN PEOPLES ASSEMBLY MEMBERS AND
US CONGRESSMEN, DO NOT READ FULL TEXTS AND FOCUS ONLY ON HEAD-

LINES. THERE IS AS A RESULT GREAT CONCERN THROUGHOUT ARAB WORLD ABOUT ENDORSEMENT OF ISRAELI DEFENSIBLE BORDERS CONCEPT.

3. AS EXAMPLE, HE SAID PRES SADAT HAD WRITTEN HIM A NOTE ON PRESS TICKER REPORTING PRES CARTER'S FIRST USE OF THIS TERM ON MARCH 8, ASKING WHAT THIS IMPLIED AND REQUESTING FULL TEXT. FAHMY SAID HE HAD NOT RESPONDED BUT WOULD SEND SADAT FULL TEXT OF PRES CARTER'S MARCH 9 PRESS CONF. FAHMY ALSO ASSERTED "SOME PEOPLE" WERE NOW SAYING SADAT SHOULD CANCEL HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON. HE QUICKLY ADDED THAT THIS OF COURSE WAS NOT A SERIOUS POSSIBILITY.

4. FAHMY WENT ON THAT CONCERN IN PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY WAS SO HIGH THAT IT HAD SCHEDULED FORMAL SESSION TO CONSIDER IMPLICATIONS OF PRES CARTER'S REMARKS. FAHMY HAD BEEN ASKED TO APPEAR, BUT WOULD NOT DO SO IN PUBLIC SESSION BECUASE HE WOULD BE FORCED TO SAY UNHELPFUL THINGS. INSTEAD HE WOULD MEET IN CLOSED SESSION WITH ITS FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE. I COMMENTED THAT HIS ELOQUENCE AND BROADER APPRECIATION OF THE ISSUES COULD BE OF GREAT HELP IN GIVING PA MEMBERS MORE BALANCED UNDERSTANDING OF PRES CARTER'S STATEMENTS, WHICH WERE INTENDED TO EMPHASIZE HIS COMMITMENT TO FUTHERING THE PEACE PROCESS.

5. ABOVE IS DISTILLATION OF OUR TALK MARCH 12 WHICH CONTINUED AGAIN MARCH 13 FOLLOWING DISCUSSION REPORTED CAIRO 4258. SECOND MEETING SHOWED THAT FAHMY HAD CAREFULLY STUDIED POINTS IN REF A AS WELL AS PRES'S PRESS CONF REMARKS AND HE SHOWED
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 CAIRO 04255 131518Z

MUCH MORE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WE WERE TRYING TO GET ACROSS. I URGED HIM TO PRESENT BALANCED PICTURE TO HIS PRES, PEOPLES ASSEMBLY AND OTHERS, AND HE SAID HE WOULD DO SO THOUGH HE STILL THOUGHT SO MUCH PUBLIC DISCUSSION WAS A MISTAKE.

6. DURING MARCH 13 TALK FAHMY SAID HE HAD WRITTEN SADAT'S SPEECH TO PALESTINIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL (SEPTOL) AND THAT IT WAS INTENDED TO BE DIRECT RESPONSE TO PRES CARTER'S REMARKS, THOUGH HIS NAME WAS NOT MENTIONED.

7. COMMENT: DESPITE GREATER UNDERSTANDING BY FAHMY OF RECENT PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS, HE AND OTHER EGYPTIANS REMAIN GREATLY CONCERNED AT WHAT THEY FEEL IS UNBALANCED AND UNNECESSARY AIRING OF VIEWS IN WAKE OF ISRAELI PM'S VISIT. I THINK PART OF HIS CONCERN IS THAT EGYPTIANS WERE NOT FOREWARNED OF STATEMENTS THEY CONSIDER OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE. I SUGGEST WE CONSIDER DESIRABILITY OF PERSONAL MESSAGE TO SADAT FROM PRES CARTER OR THE SECRETARY, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF SADAT'S FORTHCOMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON IN THREE WEEKS' TIME.

MATTHES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAIRO04255
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770086-0670
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770365/aaaaceqq.tel
Line Count: 117
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 618c24b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 STATE 53875, 77 STATE 53329, 77 CAIRO 4245
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3124391
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RABIN VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND PRES CARTER'S REMARKS ON ME
TAGS: PFOR, US, IS, XF, (RABIN, YITZHAK), (CARTER, JIMMY), (FAHMY, ISMAIL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/618c24b9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009